

I Want a Lifetime with You

Chapter 291

There were multiple versions of what had happened at the annual meeting, but it was different for Shi Nuan. She had been there in person and would be the most familiar regarding the events of that night. Shi Wei panicked, but she made sure to maintain her composure. She pushed her bottom lip out into a pout and tried to make herself look as pitiful as possible.

Shi Nuan was more than familiar with this tactic of Shi Wei's. She fell for it the first few times but eventually became immune to it.

"I saw Shi Wei and Mr. Fu being really friendly..."

"Enough!" The one who interrupted Shi Nuan was Liu Minjun. No woman could stomach her daughter-in-law cheating on her son. Liu Minjun was already feeling horrible about it. She wanted to take the chance to ease the tension between her and Shi Wei while also letting her know that she was a married woman and that there were things she shouldn't be doing.

But just thinking about how St. Dee was owned by Fu Chengyan — the very Fu Chengyan that allegedly had an affair with Shi Wei — was enough to make Liu Minjun's skin crawl. "Let's go to another store."

"Mother..." Shi Wei wasn't happy about it. Even if St. Dee wasn't going to give them the clothing items for free, they could at least get a discount or get a few freebies with the purchases. Shi Wei was already somewhat unwilling to pick up the bill for Liu Minjun's friends. If they were to go somewhere else, Shi Wei would have to cough up even more money. Moreover, Shi Wei was St. Dee's brand ambassador. If Fu Chengyan were to find out that the ambassador didn't wear their own items and visited another store instead, her endorsement deal would

likely go up in flames, as would her movie deal, and maybe even her whole career.

But Liu Minjun was furious at the moment and could care less about Shi Wei's concerns. She could only think about how her son had been cuckolded, and if they continued to stay in the store, they would become laughing stocks.

"Let's go!"

"Wait!" Shi Nuan stopped Liu Minjun. "Madam Liu, you might not know this, but Shi Wei is now St. Dee's brand ambassador, so your choice will affect St. Dee's image. If you go to another store now, my sister's endorsement deal might just be terminated. Also, Xinhuang and St. Dee are both subsidiaries of Shengyuan. In fact, this whole mall belongs to Shengyuan. So whichever store you go to, you'd technically still be supporting Shengyuan as long as you spend."

"You..." Liu Minjun was rendered speechless. She desperately wanted to bite back, but couldn't find the words to do so.

Shi Wei glared menacingly at Shi Nuan and mentally slaughtered her. "Nuan, how can you talk to mother with such disrespect? She's your elder!"

"She is your mother-in-law and Fu Xicheng's mother, not my mother. Also, this is exactly how I would talk to my own mother," Shi Nuan sneered.

Shi Wei froze. It had only been a few days since she last saw Shi Nuan. How did she suddenly become so savagely quick-witted? It must be because Shi Nuan found herself a powerful ally. That's the only reason she can act so arrogantly!

Shi Wei bit her lip. "I know you're angry because I'm with Xicheng now, but we truly love each other. If you have to blame someone, blame me, not mother. You shouldn't drag her into this!"

Shi Nuan raised her eyebrow and scoffed internally. What a hilarious thing to say!

So she thinks I'm making things difficult for them because I'm jealous and vengeful? Honestly, if Shi Wei hadn't taunted her first, she wouldn't even spare them any attention, especially since Shi Nuan didn't have any feelings towards Fu Xicheng anymore. Shi Wei's animosity towards her was truly misplaced.

Song Rongrong and Su Yian couldn't help but chuckle after hearing how shameless Shi Wei was, and this in turn only annoyed Shi Wei further. "Nuan, is this how your friends treat people?"

Shi Nuan blinked her eyes. "What's wrong with that? Can't my friends even laugh? Do you wish for them to cry instead?"

"You..."

"I think it's better if you go and pick out some clothes for your mother-in-law, sister. St. Dee is a high-end brand in Z Nation and the quality is naturally good. Such an outstanding brand will match you well. Oh, and let all the aunts try on the clothes they've picked out. I'm in a good mood today, and Shengyuan gave me a big bonus for New Year's. It'll be more than enough for me to foot the bill."

All the ladies that came with Liu Minjun were absolutely delighted with Shi Nuan's offer. They weren't bothered about who picked up the bill, as long as someone paid for them and they got free clothes. Also, even though Shi Wei's offer was pleasant to hear, she hadn't bought anything in any of the previous stores they visited. It wasn't until they arrived at St. Dee that Shi Wei become overly generous.

They couldn't figure out why until they heard Shi Nuan's explanation. Shi Wei wasn't thinking about buying things for them at all! She was just going to get free items from St. Dee and use it to flatter them. But Shi Nuan was a world's different from her sister. She was actually going to buy the items for them with her own money.

"This little lady is Wei's sister? She's such a pretty sight, not to mention generous to boot! In that case, we won't hold back!"

“As long as you’re happy,” Shi Nuan smiled. “Madam Liu, you go ahead and pick out something for yourself too. It’s New Year’s, the perfect time to get new things.”

Liu Minjun’s face had completely clouded over. Her friends had all been bought by Shi Nuan, and yet her daughter-in-law... Liu Minjun felt like she had been slapped across the face, and it was a terribly unpleasant feeling.

“Nuan, I’ve promised to buy them gifts. How can I let you pay on my behalf?” Shi Wei, too, took a harsh blow to her inflated ego. That hateful Shi Nuan is obviously doing all of this on purpose. “Your money doesn’t come easily. Even though you’re working at Shengyuan, with your position, it’s still going to be a big burden for you to buy so many clothes at once.”

Song Rongrong and Su Yian also felt that Shi Nuan was being a little rash. “You shouldn’t be throwing your money around like this.”

But Shi Nuan only smiled. “It’s fine. As long as everyone is happy.”

“Nuan, be honest with me. Are you... are you...”

“Am I what?” Shi Nuan raised her eyebrow. She was interested to hear what other shocking stories Shi Wei could come up with.

Shi Wei pretended to struggle with her words before blurting, “Are you dating a rich guy?”

Everyone gasped. They could read between the lines. Shi Wei was obviously implying that Shi Nuan had gotten herself a rich guy by using improper means.

Shi Nuan twitched her lips. “Did you forget, sister? You and mother were the ones who brought me and my current boyfriend together.” A faint smile played on Shi Nuan’s lips, but her eyes suddenly flashed with surprise as she looked towards the door.

Everyone too followed Shi Nuan's gaze and looked towards the door. There, a man stood leaning against the glass door with his arms crossed and a mischievous expression on his face. The light shone from behind him, casting shadows over his attractive face and accentuating his sharp features. The man was wearing an innocuous smile and was looking in Shi Nuan's direction.

Su Shaoqing?

Shi Nuan was bewildered. "What are you doing here?"

Su Shaoqing chuckled, put his hands into his pocket, and strode over with those long legs of his. He grinned at Shi Nuan, "To see you. Didn't you say you were out shopping with some friends?"

"Su..." Song Rongrong was surprised and couldn't understand why Su Shaoqing had suddenly appeared, but she met his piercing gaze as he quickly cut her off, "These must be Nuan's friends. Ms. Su Rongrong? And the other is Ms. Su Yian?"

"What are you..." Su Rongrong was once again interrupted. "Hello, I'm Jiang Shengfan, Nuan's boyfriend."

Su Rongrong's jaw dropped in disbelief. "Nuan, he... you..."

"Rongrong, he's the one I mentioned before. My blind date, Jiang Shengfan." Shi Nuan discreetly pinched Song Rongrong. "Be cool!"

Song Rongrong quickly came to her senses. "Oh! You're the one Nuan keeps talking about! Hello!"

Su Shaoqing made a show of shaking hands with Song Rongrong and Su Yian, then turned to look at Shi Wei. "Ms. Shi, it's only been a while since we last met. Surely, you aren't introducing me as some reprehensible person." Su Shaoqing emphasized his words, making it clear that he was warning Shi Wei.

Shi Wei's face turned pale. "Mr. Jiang, of course not! How could you be reprehensible. Haha... You sure like to joke!"

Su Shaoqing's smile disappeared. "Oh, so I misheard you?"

Shi Wei took a deep breath. "I was only making conversation with my sister. Did Mr. Jiang come here to find my sister? You sure are great to Nuan!"

"Of course. One should always treat their women like the queens they are." Su Shaoqing swept a gaze over Shi Wei. "Where is Ms. Shi's husband? Why're you out shopping with a bunch of older women?"

Liu Minjun's friends were at a loss of words, as were Shi Wei and Liu Minjun.

Su Shaoqing leaned closer to Shi Nuan and whispered, "Fu Chengyan is close by."

Shi Nuan's eyes lit up, "Really?"

Su Shaoqing nodded, "He noticed that you were in a bind."

Su Shaoqing raised his hand and gave everyone a quick look. "Wrap up whatever my girlfriend wants."

"Yes, sir. Please hold on, Mr. Jiang." The staff might not have seen Jiang Shengfan in person before, but the name was well-known.

The salesperson knew right away that it would be a huge transaction, so she rushed to get everything wrapped up. "Mr. Jiang, will you be swiping your card or..."

"Card!" Shi Nuan replied and handed the card over to the salesperson. "Give the items to those ladies later and be sure to double check the sizes." Shi Nuan then looked at Su Shaoqing, "Let's go."

Su Shaoqing nodded and gallantly took all the bags from Shi Nuan and her friends. "My car is right downstairs. Let's go find a place to eat. My treat."

"We'll take you up on it!" With food involved, Song Rongrong could care less about Su Shaoqing's true identity. Either way, she was in a great mood, especially seeing Shi Wei looking all frustrated. It made Song Rongrong feel great satisfaction. "Nuan, you can't blame me later when you're eaten out your house and home!"

"Please try!" Su Shaoqing's eyes sparkled with mischief. "Ms. Shi, we'll keep in touch!"

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Song Rongrong was the first to lose her composure and started cackling with glee once they exited the mall. “That was hilarious! Did you see Shi Wei’s face? It was practically distorted! Oh my gosh!”

Song Rongrong couldn’t stop laughing and wanted to pat Su Shaoqing on his shoulder, but realized he was too tall for her to reach. So she turned to Shi Nuan instead. “Speaking of which, what on earth are you and Su Shaoqing playing at?”

Shi Nuan raised her eyebrow and removed Song Rongrong’s hand from her shoulder. “We’re just putting on a show.” She turned to Su Shaoqing. “Where’s Yan? Didn’t you say he was close by?”

Su Shaoqing pretended to look hurt. “Mrs. Fu, do you have to follow in Fu Chengyan’s footsteps and be so heartless? Don’t forget I was the one who helped you earlier. Fu Chengyan only stuck his head in the sand while I had to show up as your fake knight in shining armor and play pretend.”

Shi Nuan couldn’t help but chuckle when she heard Su Shaoqing’s description. But before Shi Nuan could say anything, Song Rongrong jumped in. “So you also know that you’re just a fake?”

Su Shaoqing frowned. “Little lady, you’re being too harsh. But... you were pretty heroic in there just now.”

Song Rongrong tilted her chin and puffed her chest. “Of course! Who do you think I am! But I’ve only been gone for a few months, why do I feel like I’ve missed out on a lot? Just what were you two up to in there?”

“Let’s get in the car first.” Su Shaoqing unlocked the car and let them in before heading to the driver’s seat. He looked towards Shi Nuan, who was sitting next to him. “Fu Chengyan is at Prosperous Dynasty, as is Pei Jingxiu and the lot. Oh, and Ning Xi, that little firecracker!” Su Shaoqing said while starting the ignition.

Shi Nuan was surprised. Prosperous Dynasty was nowhere near where they were, which meant Su Shaoqing had clearly rushed over. “How did you know I was in trouble?”

Su Shaoqing only grinned in response. His reply didn’t matter, as Shi Nuan was able to figure it out herself. Fu Chengyan was likely worried about her safety after finding out she had been followed and also after that previous horrifying incident, and so he arranged for bodyguards to watch over her in secret.

So the bodyguards saw us getting into a confrontation with Shi Wei. They reported it to Fu Chengyan, who then sent the fake boyfriend Su Shaoqing over to help us.

Once Shi Nuan figured it out, she stopped interrogating Su Shaoqing. But for Song Rongrong and Si Yian who were sitting in the back, their exchange was like an answer-less riddle – confusing and unsatisfying. However, as curious as they were, they could tell that this was something they weren’t supposed to know and so they tactfully refrained from asking anymore questions.

Shi Nuan, however, was curious about something else. “Why is Ms. Ning a firecracker?” Shi Nuan always felt that she was a good judge of character. She had met Ning Xi a few times, and each time, she always gave off a very calm and quiet vibe. Shi Nuan just couldn’t relate her to a firecracker.

Su Shaoqing again only smiled in response. “Mrs. Fu, this relationship of yours with Fu Chengyan...” He trailed off and changed the topic. “Your sister sure is interesting.”

“Oh?”

“Interestingly shameless, that is.”

Shi Nuan froze for a few seconds. In the backseat, Song Rongrong and Su Yian burst into laughter, and Shi Nuan soon joined in. “You’re right. She is interesting!”

Shi Nuan realized that Su Shaoqing could be quite fun at times. And though he looked like he didn’t take anything seriously, when his help was needed, he fulfilled his role to a tee. Earlier, Shi Nuan had thought that she was hallucinating as Su Shaoqing was acting so out of character.

“Actually, quite a lot of people know about my relationship with Yan. I don’t think we can hide it much longer, and really, we never intended to keep it a secret in the first place.”

“So this means you’re going public?” Su Shaoqing smiled. “That’s such good news. I won’t need to be stuck between you two any longer. It’s absolute torment being your third wheel – I’m forced to watch all your PDA!”

“PDA?” Song Rongrong giggled and leaned forwards. “I’m surprised you know what that is!”

Su Shaoqing raised an eyebrow. “Of course I know what PDA is! Do you think I’m an old fart?”

Song Rongrong coughed back her laughter, then tried to make sense of all the information she had just received. “So, you and Su Shaoqing became a fake couple to fool people? But what I don’t understand is, who is Jiang Shengfan? When Shi Wei heard that name earlier, she looked absolutely terrified. I haven’t heard of this name in Jiang City before, but he should be some incredible person Shi Nuan is intimidated by just the mention of him.”

Shi Nuan thinned her lips. “You have so many questions! Which one do you want me to answer first?”

“The Jiang Shengfan one,” Song Rongrong answered after some thought.

Su Yian suddenly piped up, “The Jiang family from Sheen City?”

Shi Nuan nodded her head in surprise. “How did you know?”

Su Yian smiled. “Did you forget that my family is from Sheen City? I’ve heard people mention a son from the Jiang family. But are you sure you should be using his name? What if they find out? It won’t be good, even though he’s still in Sheen City.”

Su Shaoqing gave Su Yian a good look. “It’s fine. Technically, Ms. Su and I are from the same family.”

Su Yian just smiled in response. She was well-aware that Su Shaoqing was only saying that out of courtesy. They weren’t actually from the same family.

The Su family Su Shaoqing belonged to was one of the elites of Jiang City while Su Yian had a nondescript background. The only reason Su Shaoqing was speaking to them and hanging out with them was because of Shi Nuan.

“Shaoqing and Jiang Shengfan are brothers. They’re biologically related,” explained Shi Nuan. “And he’s given us his approval for using his name. It’s a long story, and all you need to know is that we fabricated this story to fool certain people.”

Su Yian and Su Rongrong nodded their heads. “Don’t worry. We won’t say anything until you decide to go public with Fu Chengyan.”

They eventually arrived at Prosperous Dynasty.

When the valet saw that it was Su Shaoqing’s car, he quickly rushed over. “Mr. Su.”

Su Shaoqing tossed his keys to him and led Shi Nuan and her friends upstairs.

Even though they had been to Prosperous Dynasty before, they had only been to the area on the bottom floor. This was the first time they would be entering the VIP private rooms.

Shi Nuan had been in there once, but there were a lot of people there that time, so she didn't really see much. This time, she was sure to have a good look around. She noticed this private room looked different from the previous one she saw.

Su Shaoqing, who was walking in front, turned to explain. "I'm the one who gathered everyone today, so we're using my private room. The one you went to last time was Pei Jingxiu's."

Shi Nuan nodded in awe. "I didn't realize that!"

Su Shaoqing nodded and chuckled when he saw Song Rongrong and Su Yian walking around with mouths wide open, as if they were seeing something incredible. "Each room has a different design to suit the owner's personal taste. Pei Jingxiu likes things simple and dull."

Shi Nuan nodded. No wonder the last time I came, the atmosphere in the room was kind of stuffy and even a little suffocating.

"I won't tell you about Fu Chengyan's room. Have him bring you there next time. As for mine, it's definitely more interesting." Su Shaoqing laughed as he tooted his own horn. "I can guarantee you'll all really like it when you see it."

Shi Nuan, Su Yian, and Song Rongrong were lost for words at his blatant boast.

But Su Shaoqing wasn't really concerned with their reactions. When the elevators reached the eleventh floor, he stepped out first and held the elevator doors open like a gentlemen. "Ladies first."

Su Shaoqing's private room was the furthest in on the floor. The group walked along the long corridors and noticed that there were many bodyguards standing guard. It was a rather frightening sight.

As the door swung open, all the occupants of the room turned to look at the newcomers. The first to react was none other than Fu Chengyan. He saw Shi Nuan and immediately waved her over. "Come here."

Shi Nuan happily ditched Su Shaoqing and her two friends and giddily ran over to Fu Chengyan's side. "Yan!"

Fu Chengyan, completely ignoring those around him, reached out and pulled Shi Nuan into his lap. He squeezed her hand and asked, "Why is it so cold?"

Shi Nuan froze when she felt all eyes on her. She looked down to hide her reddened face. "It's nothing. I was just outside for too long." She pulled her hand out of Fu Chengyan's grasp and said under her breath, "Everyone's looking."

Shi Nuan moved to stand up, but Fu Chengyan had his arm firmly around her waist. "I'm holding my own wife. Any objections?"

Most of them were more than happy to object, but at the sight of Fu Chengyan's smug grin, they swallowed their discontent and cursed him internally. Jerk! Li Heng noted, "It looks like the two of you have a great relationship!"

"Of course!" Fu Chengyan retorted haughtily.

Shi Nuan, who was sitting on Fu Chengyan's lap, suddenly heard Su Shaoqing curse, before saying, "Both of you are horrible people who forget about their friends!" He looked over at Su Yian and Song Rongrong, "Come in, both of you."

Song Rongrong and Si Yian were both average people. They've never been in the presence of such prominent people before, much less the legendary Big Four of Jiang City.

Before, they were content with just catching a glimpse of them from far away. Who knew Shi Nuan would actually get her hands on Fu Chengyan. After that, they got a chance to meet the man himself, which was amazing in itself. Then, one-by-one, they met Su Shaoqing, then Li Heng, and even Pei Jingxiu.

Song Rongrong and Su Yian felt as if they were living in a fantasy, especially when they were nearly blinded by Fu Chengyan and Shi Nuan's lovey-dovey actions.

The man who was rumored to be cold, heartless, and ruthless was actually sitting in front of them, holding his wife in his lap, and rubbing their adoration for each other in the audience's faces. Who could stomach such insanity!

Yet, the one half of the party involved was completely unaware and fully enjoying himself.

At that point, Shi Nuan was really feeling quite embarrassed. She pinched Fu Chengyan's arm, "Stop messing around. Let me down." If this continued on, she knew she was going to become everyone's target. She politely turned to Pei Jingxiu, Li Heng, and Ning Xi and greeted each of them. "Pei Jingxiu, Li Heng, Ms. Ning."

Pei Jingxiu was the calmest of the bunch. He stared at Fu Chengyan and cleared his throat. "Fu Chengyan, it's a little much, no?"

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Fu Chengyan grinned and looked at the bright red Shi Nuan in his lap. He held onto her waist and lifted her up, then plopped her on his seat while he himself moved to the one next to it, completely ignoring everyone's looks.

Shi Nuan felt really self-conscious and couldn't help but wonder what on earth had possessed Fu Chengyan. She lifted her head and looked at everyone. Chuckling sheepishly, she tried to divert their attention, "Everyone's here! What are we doing?"

Everyone looked at Shi Nuan as if she had lost it.

Shi Nuan could only shrink back in silence.

"Shi Nuan, just be yourself!" Li Heng spoke up to ease the awkwardness. "The two of you still remember me?"

"Yes, yes, of course, Mr. Li!"

"Just call me Li Heng!" Li Heng answered. "Su Shaoqing, you were the one who gathered us today. So where are we going now?"

"Let's go eat! I've promised Mrs. Fu's friends that I'd bring them for lunch." Su Shaoqing stood up and continued, "I've already had Zhou Zheng make a reservation."

"You sure enjoy giving my people orders," snorted Fu Chengyan, though he wasn't truly displeased.

Su Shaoqing raised an eyebrow. "Don't you enjoy giving me orders too? Alright, let's go. We're off to Yun Shui Jian." Su Shaoqing was the first to head out the door, before turning back. "Will Mrs. Fu's friends be following me or Li Heng?"

Su Rongrong and Su Yian looked to each other and decided unanimously, "We'll follow you, Mr. Su." After all, they already rode in his car earlier.

Song Rongrong and Su Yian knew how to read the room. Li Heng appeared to be approachable but wasn't actually so, while Pei Jingxiu was on a whole other level.

Amongst the Jiang City's Big Four, other than Fu Chengyan, whom they had a sliver of connection too, Su Shaoqing was the easiest to get along with. He was actually pretty normal as long as he wasn't in a temper.

Su Shaoqing smirked at Li Heng. "See, Li Heng. I told you weren't as appealing as me."

Li Heng snorted but chose to ignore Su Shaoqing's smugness. He grabbed his coat and headed out the door.

Ning Xi naturally followed Pei Jingxiu, whereas Song Rongrong and Su Yian sat in Su Shaoqing's car. Li Heng was alone in his.

Shi Nuan and Fu Chengyan were the last to leave. Fu Chengyan took Shi Nuan's hand in his. "What happened with you and Shi Wei earlier?"

"It's nothing, really." If she had a choice, she naturally wouldn't want to meet Shi Wei during the New Year. But Shi Nuan knew Shi Wei was the type of person who liked to create trouble, especially when it came to Shi Nuan.

Shi Nuan wasn't an easy person to deal with either. Previously, she had wanted to keep their relationship civil, so she usually just turned a blind eye towards Shi Wei and her actions, choosing to just endure them in silence. But now, it was as if a part of Shi Nuan had been unleashed, and she didn't want to endure any

longer, especially after she found out she wasn't really a part of the Shi family. She also realized, albeit belatedly, that tolerating them wouldn't change how they treated her, so she might as well put herself first.

"You know how Shi Wei is, always finding fault with me and thinking I'm going to snatch her things away from her."

Fu Chengyan grinned, "You do look rather threatening."

Shi Nuan raised her eyebrow then chuckled. "Why the gathering today? Doesn't Pei Jingxiu need to go back to Sheen City?"

Shi Nuan thought about Pei Jingxiu's relationship with the Ning family and Ning Xi. At first, she had thought the reason for Pei Jingxiu's return was to bring Ning Xi back to the Ning family, but it appeared she was mistaken.

"He has his plans."

Shi Nuan nodded and didn't push further. "Oh right! Did you have bodyguards follow me around?"

Fu Chengyan nodded. "Why? You don't like it?"

Shi Nuan shook her head. "That's not it. Why haven't I seen them before?"

"They're always hiding in the shadows. If you don't like having them around, then I'll dismiss them in time. But not now, I'm worried about your safety."

Shi Nuan smiled as she grasped Fu Chengyan's hand. The two exited Prosperous Dynasty and got into their car. "I know you're doing this for my own good. It's fine to have them around. You'll worry less that way."

"Good!"

The group eventually arrived at Yun Shui Jian, where Su Shaoqing had reserved the biggest private room. The manager immediately appeared when they arrived. It was rare for so many prominent people to gather at Yun Shui Jian. The manager was worried about not providing them with the best service, so he came to take care of them himself.

Zhou Zheng had already ordered beforehand, so when they arrived, the food was ready to be served. Fu Chengyan and Shi Nuan were the last to arrive.

Su Shaoqing couldn't help but tease them. "I say, Fu Chengyan. Is it that unbearable if you don't show off how in love you are every second?"

Fu Chengyan smirked, "Yes!"

Su Shaoqing was once again too astounded to reply.

"Oh, Mrs. Fu. Your two friends are pretty capable!" Su Shaoqing was referring to what had happened at the mall earlier.

Su Shaoqing told the story animatedly, drawing laughter from all around. If Shi Nuan didn't know what Su Shaoqing did for a living, she would've guessed he was a professional storyteller.

Su Shaoqing continued, "Ms. Song is so quick-witted and great with words! You should be a lawyer!"

Song Rongrong, who was busy eating, lifted her head when she heard her name. "Why should I be a lawyer? I don't know anything about law! Why don't you say that I'm on the track team? I'm great at both sprints and marathons. Ask Nuan if you don't believe me!"

Right at that moment, Shi Nuan was busy eating the prawns that Fu Chengyan was deshelling and feeding to her. Upon Song Rongrong's mention of Shi Nuan, everyone's eyes turned to her, which made her freeze on the spot again. She

blushed, “That’s right. Rongrong is great at track. Once, a guy confessed to her and she just took off and ran. The guy never caught up to her.”

Su Shaoqing burst into laughter, as did everyone else. He teased, “So the reason you’re still single now is because you run too fast and no one can catch you?”

Song Rongrong glared at Shi Nuan then took a napkin to wipe her mouth. “Mr. Su. Why’re you talking like you aren’t single yourself? We’re all the same. There’s no need for the pot to call the kettle black.”

Su Shaoqing remained silent.

Li Heng laughed after seeing Su Shaoqing have one of his rare speechless moments. Su Shaoqing glared at him, then smiled innocently, “Li Heng, aren’t you single too? Why’re you laughing?”

With all the back and forth, the atmosphere was getting pretty lively. Song Rongrong and Su Yian finally breathe a sigh of relief for not ruining the gathering or embarrassing Shi Nuan.

Shi Nuan herself grinned happily when she saw that everyone was getting along well. Just then another prawn was stuffed into her mouth.

Shi Nuan looked at Fu Chengyan with puppy eyes and told him, “I’m full.”

Fu Chengyan nodded nonchalantly and replied, “Alright. One more. The last one!”

Everyone eventually realized the whole plate of prawns had been practically polished by Shi Nuan alone, while the plate in front of Fu Chengyan was stacked with a mountain of prawn shells.

Fu Chengyan really knew how to rub his relationship in the singleton’s faces.

While everyone was eating, the manager knocked on the door, entered, and walked up to Fu Chengyan. He politely said, "Mr. Fu, someone asked for you."

Fu Chengyan narrowed his eyes, "Who?"

"They said their surname is Song, and that you would know who they are," replied the manager carefully.

Fu Chengyan calmly finished peeling the last prawn and fed it to Shi Nuan. "Eat."

Shi Nuan took the prawn and ate it, and watched Fu Chengyan wiping his hands leisurely and steadily.

"Alright. Bring them over to the Sunset room. I'll head over soon."

"Yes, sir!"

When the manager left, Su Shaoqing asked, "Your uncle?"

The only 'Song' who would relentlessly track Fu Chengyan down was Song Huaiyan.

Fu Chengyan nodded, his eyes flashing. "I'll be back in a while." He got up and looked at Shi Nuan. "Eat more!"

Shi Nuan felt her lips twitch and wondered what had gotten into Fu Chengyan today. But because there were so many people watching them, she only gave him a quick nod in response.

He patted her head and left the room.

Song Huaiyan had been taken to the Sunset room by the manager. He had been waiting for around ten minutes before Fu Chengyan made his appearance.

The manager respectfully opened the door for Fu Chengyan, "Sir."

Fu Chengyan nodded and asked for a pot of tea.

"Yes, sir."

Fu Chengyan sauntered in and saw Song Huaiyan looking at him in a displeased manner. "Yan, it seems like you're getting too big for your britches lately."

It had been three days since the incident, but he could see neither Song Jingyu nor Song Zhenyan at the hospital. He couldn't get anywhere with the Fu family either, and finding Fu Chengyan was an arduous task. If he hadn't gotten someone to follow Fu Chengyan today, meeting him would be virtually impossible.

He was Fu Chengyan's elder, and yet he was being led around by him. This attitude of his greatly displeased him. "I'm your uncle!"

Fu Chengyan smiled, pulled out a seat, and sat across from Song Huaiyan. "Don't be mad, uncle. It's not good for your health." Fu Chengyan's tone was cold.

He draped his coat on the back of his chair. Just then, the waiter brought in the tea set. "Mr. Fu, would you like for us to prepare the tea or would you like to do it yourself?"

Fu Chengyan waved his hand, "Leave us."

He waited until the waiter left before he started fiddling with the tea set. After a while, he lifted his head and looked at Song Huaiyan. "With all due respect, why aren't you spending New Year's with your family in the capital? Is there something urgent in Jiang city?"

Song Huaiyan's anger flared up with Fu Chengyan's words.

Fu Chengyan was clearly feigning ignorance. How can he not know why I am here?

But Fu Chengyan maintained a nonchalant demeanor throughout, as if he truly didn't know. For the first time in his life, Song Huaiyan felt like he had lost to someone younger than him.

He broke out into a cold sweat with this realization. This was something he dreaded to see.

"I heard your mother got injured a few days ago, so I came over to check up on her, but I couldn't find her. That's why I'm paying you a visit. Is your mother with you?"

"Oh?" Fu Chengyan paused. "My mother is hurt? How did she get hurt?"

Song Huaiyan was only throwing words out there to hint at his true intentions. He never expected Fu Chengyan to play along without giving away any information.

"Seeing that you came all the way over here, it seems like my mother really did get injured. But since no one informed me, I doubt it's anything too serious. You shouldn't worry too much, uncle."

"You..."

"You have a strong sibling bond with my mother, so I do understand your plight. But if you personally came here for such a small matter, others might misunderstand and think that we, the Fu family, are abusing her again."

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Song Huaiyan was stunned when he heard it. He did not expect to be at a disadvantage so quickly. He tried to be indirect with Fu Chengyan as being explicit would mean admitting defeat.

To him, Fu Chengyan was a tough opponent, and he wondered where Fu Chengyan inherited his temperament from.

However, there was no way he could be explicit as he would have to admit that Song Jingyu was sick. When that happened, he would lose his last bargaining chip.

Fu Chengyan wasn't in a hurry as he wasn't the one who needed help. Instead, he wanted to see how far Song Huaiyan was willing to go for Song Jingyu.

He felt that Song Huaiyan shouldn't be sincere given his Machiavellian character, especially when the subject in question was a child borne by his old flame with another man. Even though Song Jingyu had inherited her mother's pretty features, it was an undeniable fact that she was ill.

Fu Chengyan was preparing tea when he looked at his watch. "Aren't you going to visit my mother? Or do you prefer to waste your time here with me?"

Song Huaiyan was outraged and couldn't bear it anymore. "Speak. Just tell me what you want."

Fu Chengyan smiled in response. "I think you are overreacting. I'm sure you're aware that I really don't want anything."

Song Huaiyan took a deep breath. "I want to see Jingyu."

"If you want to see her, please go ahead. I don't understand why you're looking for me instead!" Fu Chengyan poured a cup of tea for Song Huaiyan. "Aren't you losing sight of what's in front of you?"

"Let's cut to the chase. Jingyu is sick and is in the hospital. However, the hospital staff aren't allowing me to see her. I know you're behind this!" Song Huaiyan said in frustration. "Jingyu is your sister. How could you do this to her?"

"Fu Chengyan looked up and said, "What are you so angry for?"

Now that Song Huaiyan had reached his limit, Fu Chengyan put his teacup down calmly and leaned on his chair. He stretched his fingers and tapped on the table. "Is Jingyu sick? I don't know anything about it. If you don't believe..."

"Enough." Song Huaiyan slammed his teacup on the table while his eyes were filled with anger. "I'll take her away from Jiang City!"

"So, you're here to take your daughter home with you!" Fu Chengyan smiled as he replied, "This is a good decision. Ms. Song has left home long enough, and it isn't good for her to be out for such an extended period of time. As a lady of the Song family, it would be wise for her to rest at home. In the event she caused any trouble, it would be a terrible thing if word got out."

Song Huaiyan's expression darkened and said, "Yan, you're right. I will take Jingyu back to the capital tomorrow!"

Fu Chengyan nodded. "That is for the best. Since you care for Ms. Song so much, I will try my best to help. You must be tired after so many days. Would you like to go back and rest first? I'll notify you when I hear something!"

Fu Chengyan was visibly relieved. Although it wasn't what he initially expected, having Song Jingyu sent home was good enough for him.

“Alright. I’ll wait for you to notify me of the good news!”

Fu Chengyan nodded as he stood up. He then put his coat over his arm and said, “I’ll do my best to expedite this matter for you; however, you must remember that this is Jiang City and not the capital. Certain matters...”

“Don’t worry, I’ll be stricter with her after I bring her home!” Song Huaiyan was furious and his veins were bulging, but he had to keep his temper in check. “Jingyu is not the kind who will disobey!”

“That’s wonderful then!”

Fu Chengyan smirked, “In that case I’ll have someone send you out!”

“There’s no need; I’ll go out myself!”

“Alright, thanks for coming!”

It was no longer necessary for Fu Chengyan to interact with Song Huaiyan as he had already achieved his objective.

Everyone was almost done with the food by the time he returned to the private room. When they saw Fu Chengyan walk in cheerfully, they knew that the negotiations had gone smoothly.

Fu Chengyan sat down beside Shi Nuan and looked around. “Why is everyone looking at me?”

Shi Nuan laughed and refilled his bowl of rice. “Have you completed the discussion?”

Fu Chengyan nodded. “Yes!”

“Let’s eat, you didn’t manage to eat much just now,” she added, “There’s not much left; would you like to order more?”

Shi Nuan signaled to the waiter as she spoke. However, Fu Chengyan stopped her. “No need; there’s still a lot left. Besides, I’m not that hungry!” Fu Chengyan patted Shi Nuan on her shoulders. “Are you full?”

“Yes!”

Fu Chengyan started eating at Shi Nuan’s behest. In a short while, his phone rang. It was Zhou Zheng. “Mr. Fu, just now Song Huaiyan stopped outside your private room for a while before he left!”

Fu Chengyan’s eyes narrowed in suspicion. “Alright, I understand.”

“What do you want us to do?”

“Don’t do anything yet. Go to him tomorrow morning and take him to see Song Jingyu.” As he spoke, he raised his hand to stop Shi Nuan from serving him. “Give her another dose of the medication before you let Song Huaiyan see her.”

Everyone was shocked when they heard what Fu Chengyan said. They had not expected him to be that ruthless.

Only Pei Jingxiu and Li Heng did not respond in any way. It was Su Shaoqing that had the biggest reaction, but it wasn’t because he pitied Song Jingyu. “Chengyan, are you crazy to do this to her now? Have you thought it through? You do realize that that’s my hospital!”

Fu Chengyan’s narrow eyes sparkled with glee, yet his gaze remained ruthless. “If I don’t teach Song Huaiyan a lesson, he will never submit!” he said as he understood his uncle’s character very well.

Although Song Huaiyan had agreed to take Song Jingyu back, she would likely insist to return in the future given how stubborn she was.

Song Jingyu would always be a bargaining chip for Song Huaiyan. As long as she was in sound mind, he would never give up on his plan. Song Huaiyan would only rest if his bargaining chip was broken.

Fu Chengyan wanted to avoid directly attacking the Song family unless it was the last resort.

Even if they were a nuisance, they were still based in the capital and were considered one of the most prominent families there. It would not be easy to go against them.

Su Shaoqing shrugged helplessly. "I've got to give it to you." Fu Chengyan had thought through this matter comprehensively.

Fu Chengyan furrowed his brows when he heard it. "I don't like to do anything that wastes my time!"

Zhou Zheng had heard all he needed to hear and said, "Mr. Fu, I shall take my leave first. The people who are looking after Song Jingyu said that she has been babbling about; she asked them to get lost and that there was a child!"

Fu Chengyan raised his brows in surprise. "A child?"

"Yes!"

Fu Chengyan looked at Su Shaoqing from the corner of his eye, sending a chill down the latter's spine. "Why are you looking at me?" asked Su Shaoqing uncomfortably.

"Can mental patients still speak logically?" Fu Chengyan's slender fingers tapped on his knee in an irregular rhythm.

His words shocked Su Shaoqing. Even Shi Nuan who was beside him could understand what he meant. "Yan, you..."

Fu Chengyan smirked. "Heng, it appears we need your help this time."

Li Heng nodded. "Don't forget what you have promised me earlier."

Fu Chengyan nodded as both men reached a consensus. "I'll arrange the meeting for you within the next few days. The rest is up to you."

Li Heng's eyes sparkled. "Sure!"

Everyone else was puzzled as no one knew what the two of them were talking about. Shi Nuan managed to guess what was going on. She looked at Fu Chengyan before turning her gaze to Li Heng.

After they left the restaurant, everyone else went back to their respective homes while Su Shaoqing sent Song Rongrong and Su Yian home.

On the journey back home, Shi Nuan kept thinking about what Fu Chengyan said. "You're asking them to give Song Jingyu another dose? What does that mean? Do you have anything to do with her mental breakdown?"

"What?" Fu Chengyan turned towards her and caressed her hair with a smile. "What do you want to know?"

Shi Nuan shook her head. "Nothing!" She wasn't really keen to know about anything related to Song Jingyu. She was just worried that Fu Chengyan would do something bad for her sake. She wasn't a saint, but the thought of Fu Chengyan doing the dirty work for her made her feel uneasy.

"Alright, it's no big deal. You always wear your heart on your sleeve; it's so obvious to others!" Fu Chengyan reached out to soothe her knitted eyebrows as his fingertips rubbed her forehead. "Your husband isn't incompetent."

"Hey, I don't mean that!" Shi Nuan felt relieved after hearing that. Fu Chengyan must have his reasons for doing that and would have clearly thought through his

plans, so I shouldn't fret for him. "By the way, what were you and Li Heng talking about?"

"Pei Huan!" Fu Chengyan didn't plan to hide this from Shi Nuan so he told her directly. "Do you still remember when I told you that my uncle and aunt had their child switched?"

Shi Nuan nodded. "I remember – that's your sister. Didn't you say her name was Fu Jiazhen? Her adopted father named her Pei Huan?"

Fu Chengyan nodded. He explained to Shi Nuan about Pei Huan and the Fu clan, as well as what happened between her, Li Heng, and the Li family.

"Li Heng was the first to know Pei Huan. When they got together, I knew about it. But I didn't know that she was my sister. It was only when my aunt became sick and needed a bone marrow transplant did they realize that the daughter they had raised for twenty years wasn't their biological daughter. Finally, they managed to find out that Pei Huan was their real daughter."

Shi Nuan nodded in acknowledgment. "That's why the Fu clan invited Pei Huan to stay with them?"

"No, they didn't." Fu Chengyan sighed. "She was with Li Heng then and both of them were close. My uncle and aunt couldn't bring themselves to break those two up. However, something happened later on that caused a misunderstanding between Pei Huan and Li Heng. It was then that Pei Huan left. Three years have passed since then!"

Shi Nuan was stunned. "Three years?"

Li Heng and Pei Huan have been apart for three years?

"Why didn't he look for her?" Shi Nuan felt that Li Heng was still in love with Pei Huan, or else he wouldn't have spoken to Fu Chengyan that way.

“How did you know that he didn’t?”

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The truth was that Li Heng had been searching for her throughout these three years. Fu Chengyan knew how much effort he had put in, or else he wouldn't have agreed to help. After all, Pei Huan was his sister as well as his uncle and aunt's precious gem.

Shi Nuan was shocked and asked, "So he had been searching for her all the while?" She had realized the answer by now, which was the same reason why Fu Chengyan had agreed to help.

Although Fu Chengyan always seemed to be a cold person, Shi Nuan knew that he had a heart of gold, especially when it came to those he cared about. Regardless of whether it was Li Heng or Pei Huan, they were all family to him.

"What do you plan to do? It won't be easy with your uncle and aunt, since Pei Huan is their daughter. Besides, the misunderstanding between Li Heng and Pei Huan has yet to be resolved!"

"I plan to start with my aunt!"

Shi Nuan nodded. "I also think it's easier to talk to her. However, her health...is she able to take it?"

"Don't worry, my aunt is a lot stronger than we think. We just can't let my uncle know about it yet. He wasn't really happy with Li Heng over the breakup. Pei Huan was his long-lost daughter which he missed very much. He didn't expect her to be hurt by someone from the Li family."

“That’s the reason why Shengyuan never partnered with the Li Group on any business deals?” Shi Nuan made a bold assumption.

Fu Chengyan couldn’t help but laugh. “My uncle may look strict but he still has a child’s temper. If that is what makes him feel better, then so be it!”

This... this is really... childish!

Shi Nuan didn’t know what else to say, other than finding it peculiar. Fu Chengyan continued, “Actually, Li Heng... He doesn’t really care about the Li Group. Everyone assumes that his goal is to take over the Li Group, but it actually isn’t.”

“Oh? How do you know?”

Fu Chengyan smiled when he saw Shi Nuan’s stunned expression. He felt that it was extremely adorable. “What if I told you that he owns another company, and that it is big enough to swallow up the Li Group?”

Shi Nuan was speechless.

Fu Chengyan shook his head. “Li Heng did a lot for Huan, and that’s the reason why I’m willing to help him.”

Song Huaiyan woke up the next day before the sun was up. He had been tossing and turning the whole night in the hotel. Although Fu Chengyan had agreed to let Song Jingyu go, he still wasn’t confident that it would happen. He didn’t trust Fu Chengyan.

But knowing he was at a disadvantage given the current circumstance, he had no other choice than to believe Fu Chengyan.

He remembered what Fu Chengyan did three years ago. He had underestimated him due to his youth and didn’t in any way expect him to rock the solid foundations of the Song family.

Song Huaiyan would feel frustrated whenever he thought about this issue. In fact, the problems he faced had been growing recently, adding to his worries. Xiang Shaoshen of the Xiang Group from Hai City refused to meet with him, while Song Jingyao was giving him a lot of pressure at home. He didn't expect the Fu clan of Jiang City to be giving him trouble as well. No matter how ambitious he previously had been, he was starting to doubt his every move. He wondered which of them was the cause of his current predicament.

The patriarch of the Song family had called him countless times over the last few days. He wanted Song Huaiyan to quickly resolve the matter and bring Song Jingyu home.

What the patriarch didn't know was that while Song Huaiyan was willing to do so, he simply could not find anyone who could help him solve the problem over the last few days. He had again underestimated Fu Chengyan, whose methods had improved significantly. He did not expect him to be even more cunning after three years.

He stopped pacing around the room when he heard a knock on the door. "Who is it?"

"Mr. Song, I'm Mr. Fu's assistant, Zhou Zheng."

Zhou Zheng?

Song Huaiyan squinted and then opened the door immediately. He saw Zhou Zheng standing at the door, smiling. "Mr. Song, Mr. Fu has instructed me to take you to see Ms. Song. Your daughter is at the hospital and is feeling better!"

Song Huaiyan raised his eyebrows when he heard that Song Jingyu was indeed at the hospital. He had also been to the hospital, but could not see her.

Knowing that Fu Chengyan was the mastermind, Song Huaiyan just did not expect the former to be so powerful to collude with a hospital.

How could it have dawned on him that the hospital actually belonged to Su Shaoqing, who had full control over his own territory?

Zhou Zheng led Song Huaiyan to an independent wing of the hospital. It was a section of the hospital where only the rich were warded and to which ordinary people had no access.

Zhou Zheng brought Song Huaiyan to the entrance of her ward. “This is Ms. Song’s ward. You have to be prepared...” Before he could finish, they could hear a fierce scream from inside. It was a terrifying scream.

On top of the scream, they could hear things being thrashed around. No one could see what was happening inside. Just the noise alone was enough to frighten anyone.

When Song Huaiyan heard the screams, his face went pale immediately. Fear gleamed in his eyes. “What’s happening?”

Why is Song Jingyu behaving like this? When I left the last time, she seemed to be fine. What happened to her?

Zhou Zheng put on a grave expression. “That... Was Ms. Song provoked by something? I heard the hospital staff say that she had been muttering to herself. Something about staying away and a child... I’m not going to hide it from you. Mr. Fu knew that Ms. Song was here and had covered it up. After all, she had hurt two members of the Fu clan and if this gets out in Jiang City, it would be a huge scandal!”

“What do you mean?”

“Ms. Song slashed Master Fu and his wife – that is to say, your sister and brother-in-law. I’m afraid you don’t know about that! The younger Mr. Fu didn’t call the police on the account that Ms. Song is your daughter. However, Ms. Song has become too dangerous and almost hurt the Old Master, too, so Mr. Fu didn’t

have a choice and sent her here instead. As for the child mentioned by Ms. Song...”

“That is likely her pet dog. She hasn’t been home a long time, so she’s probably missing him.” Song Huaiyan quickly explained. “Since I’m here, I’ll take her back to the capital. Open the door!”

Song Huaiyan couldn’t stand to hear the heart-wrenching screams inside. He needed to take Song Jingyu away, back to her home. As to what happens after that, he will have to think through it again.

As Zhou Zheng had achieved his objective, he stepped aside and opened the door.

Just as the door opened, Song Jingyu rushed out. The moment she saw Song Huaiyan, she clawed him across his face with her fingernails. “Evil man, return my child!”

Song Huaiyan could only feel a stinging pain on his face and something oozing out of his skin. His eyes were filled with shock as he grabbed Song Jingyu’s shoulders with both his arms. “Jingyu, what happened to you? It’s me, your father!”

“Father? Haha, I don’t have a father. You’re an evil man! Evil man, give me back my child! No, don’t you touch me!”

Song Huaiyan’s eyes flashed with panic as he held on to Song Jingyu tightly. When he saw Zhou Zheng looking on coldly, he yelled, “What are you standing there for? Help me!”

Zhou Zheng went over and help subdue her. “Get the doctor to give her a sedative!”

Song Jingyu finally calmed down after the doctor gave her an injection. Zhou Zheng then said, “Mr. Song, what about the injuries to your face?”

Song Huaiyan touched his face and realized that Song Jingyu had scratched him badly enough for it to bleed. "I'm fine. I'm taking her back." There was no time to lose.

Zhou Zheng nodded. "Of course, Mr. Fu had said that Ms. Song is the apple of your eye, your daughter. You can take her with you anytime!"

When Zhou Zheng was sure Song Huaiyan had left, he gave Su Shaoqing a call. "Mr. Su, I want to have the security footage here."

Zhou Zheng passed the security footage to Fu Chengyan. When he turned it on to watch, all his attention was focused on Song Huaiyan. "Was he acting strangely when he saw Song Jingyu today?"

Zhou Zheng nodded and explained his perspective.

Fu Chengyan chuckled as his fingers tapped on the study desk. "Your observational skills have been improving recently. Go and find out whatever it is that Song Huaiyan is hiding."

"Yes!"

"Also, investigate what Song Jingyu meant when she talked about the evil man and her child. If you are stretched, you can always ask Li Heng for help. Liang Lin is better at this than you."

The corner of Zhou Zheng's lip twitched and he wondered if Fu Chengyan was really his boss. How could he think so incompetently of his own subordinate! However, Zhou Zheng could only pretend that he didn't hear it and politely replied, "Yes."

"A pet?" Fu Chengyan laughed. He did not expect to hear such a juvenile lie coming out of Song Huaiyan.

He was still little when he visited the Song family in the capital for the first time. There, he saw with his own eyes the younger Song Jingyu cruelly torturing a dog with a knife. How could someone who was so cruel be able to like a dog, let alone have it as a pet? Even if she did have a dog, it would be for torture only!

Even Arnold himself was bullied by Song Jingyu a few times; she was already a teenager then. Her character has been like this all these years. How is it possible that she could change so quickly?

“Mr. Fu, what do you want me to do with the data?”

“Keep them first,” he replied, “Has Song Huaiyan left Jiang City?”

“I’ve checked his flight, it’s for the day after!”

The day after?

That would mean that he would still be in Jiang City for two more days. “Are they both at the hotel?”

“Yes, he has asked for a doctor to see her. They should be checking on her now.”

Fu Chengyan smirked, he didn’t expect Song Huaiyan to be so thorough.

It appears that he had something planned for the two days in Jiang City. “Have all the pictures been cleared out?”

“Don’t worry, our informant at the Fu residence has destroyed all the evidence, including the pictures. I guarantee there’s not a trace of it left. However...” Zhou Zheng was a little worried. “Your mother may have seen those pictures, would she...?”

Fu Chengyan looked up and shook his head. "Even if she did say anything, it would be useless." Without any evidence, there was nothing Song Huaiyan could do even if he believed her.

Not to mention that the pictures taken were really unclear. When Song Jingyu's mental breakdown started, the scene became chaotic quickly. Song Zhenyan had jumped on top of Song Jingyu to subdue her. There was no time to examine what was on the pictures.

"Since Song Jingyu brought up a child, you should add in some photographs of a baby. This is to test Song Huaiyan and my mother's reaction!"